

Promoting Responsible Fatherhood: An Update

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Summary

According to many indicators of child well-being, America's children fare worse than their counterparts of just a generation ago. The sharp rise in the number of children living in fatherless households is a significant factor influencing child well-being. Today four out of every ten children in the United States are not living in the same home as their biological father, and nearly half of all children being raised in mother-headed families are living in poverty. Even when controlling for family income, children growing up without their fathers' involvement face more difficulties. According to the National Fatherhood Initiative, children with absent fathers are more likely to fail or drop out of school, engage in early sexual activity, develop drug and alcohol problems, and experience or perpetrate violence.*

In recent years, the National Fatherhood Initiative and other national organizations have sought to raise public awareness that fathers make unique and irreplaceable contributions to the lives of their children and that every American needs to encourage and support men to be good and responsible fathers. These efforts have focused on all fathers, including fathers in two-parent families, teen fathers, noncustodial fathers (both divorced and never-married), and single fathers.

In recent years, Governors also have worked to increase public awareness of the importance of fathers' involvement in the lives of their children by convening statewide summits and conferences and sponsoring statewide media campaigns to promote positive father involvement. In addition, states have implemented programs that build the parenting skills of new fathers, enable disadvantaged or noncustodial fathers to improve their relationships with their children, and prepare teen fathers to become good fathers.

This StateLine highlights initiatives to promote responsible fatherhood. Pennsylvania Governor Tom Ridge and Washington Governor Gary Locke, chair and vice chair, respectively, of the National Governors' Association (NGA) Committee on Human Resources, asked all of the nation's Governors to submit a short description of one initiative to promote responsible fatherhood that they admire. The NGA Center for Best Practices compiled and standardized these descriptions for distribution at the NGA 1998 Winter Meeting, February 21–24, 1998, in Washington, D.C. Additional initiative profiles were requested and submitted in June and July, and the StateLine was updated for distribution at the NGA 1998 Annual Meeting, August 1–4, 1998, in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

Overview

Thirty-nine Governors submitted descriptions of fatherhood initiatives. Most of the initiatives profiled by the states fall into six categories:

- services for low-income, noncustodial fathers;
- parenting skills training;
- public awareness campaigns;
- state fatherhood commissions;
- comprehensive funding streams; and
- premature fatherhood prevention.

Services for Low-Income, Noncustodial Fathers

Eight states—Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Missouri, New Hampshire, Tennessee, Wisconsin, and Washington—highlighted initiatives for low-income, noncustodial fathers. These programs provide employment-related services to enable fathers to meet their financial responsibilities. Most also provide support services and parenting skills training to foster paternal involvement with their children. The initiatives featured by Louisiana, Missouri, and New Hampshire explicitly target low-income, noncustodial fathers who are behind on their child support payments. Maine has established a regional system of job fairs that helps unemployed, noncustodial parents who have not paid child support in the last sixty days identify employment opportunities. Initiatives in Maryland and Wisconsin serve unmarried, expectant fathers in addition to current fathers. Tennessee's project encourages the children of noncustodial fathers and the mothers of these children to take advantage of the services offered. The local project highlighted by Washington includes a public awareness campaign to change the way fatherhood is viewed in neighborhoods. More than half of the states that have applied for federal Welfare-to-Work formula grants plan to target noncustodial fathers of children receiving Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) for employment and training and other related services.

Parenting Skills Training

Several states profiled projects that build the parenting skills of fathers. Connecticut has launched a demonstration project that targets noncustodial fathers of children enrolled in Head Start. Delaware offers parenting education and other services to incarcerated fathers. A Hawaii initiative works with fathers in families identified as at risk for child abuse and neglect. Idaho has developed a parent training curriculum for divorced fathers. New York funded four demonstration projects serving young fathers. North Carolina featured a program serving teen fathers. A project in Ohio helps young fathers become responsible citizens and involved, caring parents. Pennsylvania funds a local mentoring program that links teenage dads with responsible adult men who are fathers. Utah provides parenting and communication skills training to families that includes specific workshops for fathers.

Public Awareness Campaigns

To increase public awareness of the critical role of fathers, Arizona, Colorado, and Michigan have partnered with professional sport franchises to spearhead media campaigns that use professional athletes as role models. Arkansas convened a conference that included men wanting to become better fathers among the attendees and included sessions focused on fatherhood. Georgia has enlisted nearly 400 men to serve as spokespersons, mentors, and advocates of better parenting and has publicized the campaign through bus cards, public service announcements in movie theaters, and television, radio, and newspaper interviews. A private organization in Illinois heightened public awareness by hosting a community leader briefing, conducting a survey on people's perceptions of fatherhood, training "father skills" trainers, and publishing children's essays on fatherhood. Iowa's Dads Make a Difference initiative provides young people with the opportunity to discuss the important role of fathers in their children's lives and the risks young people face in the path to adulthood. South Carolina convened a summit in 1997 to shape a consensus among community leaders and social service providers on the importance of fatherhood. Texas will convene the first annual "Texas Fatherhood Forum: A Statewide Call to Action" in Houston on October 8, 1998. Virginia launched a multipronged campaign that encourages all men to commit themselves to being good fathers, including spending time with their children and becoming more responsible for the health and welfare of their children.

State Fatherhood Commissions

Florida and Massachusetts have established commissions focusing on responsible fatherhood. A commission in Florida is addressing the need for a coordinated, statewide effort to increase awareness of the effects of absent fathers on the state's children and promote responsible fatherhood. Massachusetts' commission was established in response to the crisis of absent fathers and the need for greater government and community coordination in support of the commonwealth's families.

Comprehensive Funding Streams

California and Indiana have established new funding streams to establish and support local programs promoting responsible fatherhood. California's initiative seeks to break the cycle of teen and unwed pregnancies and address the issues of statutory rape and absent fathers across the state. Indiana has funded

fifty-four programs across the state to increase fathers' involvement with their children, decrease out-of-wedlock pregnancies, improve service accessibility for fathers, improve parenting skills and coparenting relationships, raise the high school graduation rates of teen fathers, and increase paternity establishment and child support.

Premature Fatherhood Prevention

New Jersey, Puerto Rico, Rhode Island, and Wyoming highlighted efforts to encourage boys or young men to postpone becoming fathers. New Jersey and Rhode Island are funding community-based organizations to provide services for high-risk male populations. Puerto Rico is training 650 teachers to supplement the commonwealth's health education curriculum with a component designed to promote responsible paternity among school-age children. Wyoming is conducting research to identify the barriers to male involvement in family planning.

Initiatives in Montana, Nebraska, and Oklahoma suggest other ways to promote responsible fatherhood. Montana Governor Marc Racicot has set a standard for the state's human service agencies to ensure that strategies targeting families provide for the full participation of fathers. Nebraska has a Hospital Paternity Acknowledgment Program to encourage unmarried fathers to acknowledge paternity of their child at the time of birth. Oklahoma has revamped its treatment approach for juvenile offenders to address the root causes of their anger, which is often directed toward their fathers for being abusive or uninvolved, and begin to heal their relationships with their fathers.

Together, the initiatives highlighted by the thirty-nine Governors represent a broad range of both state-driven and locally driven approaches to promoting responsible fatherhood. In many of these states, the Governor has actively and visibly worked to increase public awareness of the important parenting role of fathers. Many states also are supporting community-based programs that encourage fathers to take a more active role in raising their children. Governors recognize that promoting responsible fatherhood reduces many of the problems faced by children and youth, fortifies and strengthens families, and improves the overall quality of life in their states.

Selected Initiatives to Promote Responsible Fatherhood

Arizona

The Arizona Division of Child Support Enforcement has partnered with the Child Support Coordinating Council and the Arizona Cardinals of the National Football League to increase public recognition of the importance of being a responsible father. Governor Jane Dee Hull held a press conference to kick off the campaign, "Fatherhood Can Be Child's Play." To promote the campaign, billboards have been posted in the state's two largest metropolitan areas, Phoenix and Tucson, and posters have been distributed statewide to child support enforcement offices and community-based organizations, such as Head Start programs. The posters and billboards portraying members of the Cardinals with their children read, "Halfback, Fullback, Piggyback" and "No Penalty for Holding."

The total cost of the project was \$39,690; of this amount, the state provided \$13,230. Contact: Nancy Mendoza, Division of Child Support Enforcement, Arizona Department of Economic Security, 602/274-7646.

Arkansas

Governor Mike Huckabee convened the Governor's Conference on the Family November 1, 1997, to address the need to strengthen Arkansas families. The conference centered on the principles that families are the bedrock on which healthy societies are built and that marriage is the heart of family life. To ensure the future economic, moral, physical, and psychological health of Arkansas' children and grandchildren, the state must work to preserve this firm foundation. Wade Horn, executive director of the National Fatherhood Initiative, played a key role in the Governor's conference. He led a general session and two concurrent sessions that focused on fatherhood and the emerging fatherhood movement.

A committee composed of the Governor's staff and volunteers planned, organized, and implemented the conference, which sought to expose Arkansas citizens to the best possible resources available for strengthening marriage and families; equip parents and organizations with the tools needed to fortify families; and enlist parents, businesses, public servants, churches, and synagogues in the effort. The conference participants included couples seeking to strengthen their marriage, men wanting to become better fathers, clergy developing premarriage counseling programs, and concerned citizens interested in learning how to mentor youth. In addition, citizens concerned about juvenile delinquency and divorce reform, families needing financial guidance, social workers dealing with welfare reform, and citizens generally concerned about the current state of families in Arkansas were invited to participate in the conference.

To finance the conference, \$92,000 was raised from the state, private donors, registration fees, and interest accrued on the account. The actual cost of convening the conference was \$73,000. The Governor's commitment and participation were critical to the success of the conference. Not only did he contribute \$10,000 in state dollars as seed money for the event, but he also taped radio and television advertisements promoting the conference, contributed one full-time staff person to the project, and served as a keynote speaker for one of the general sessions. Contact: Chris Pyle, liaison for family life issues, 501/682-3616 or chris.pyle@gov.state.ar.us.

California

More and more California children are being raised by single mothers, often without the benefit of any positive male role models. In some neighborhoods, as many as nine in ten babies are born without their fathers present. Many will spend their entire lives fatherless. Despite the heroic efforts of single parents, the tragic results are clear—skyrocketing teen pregnancy, increased adolescent drug and alcohol use, higher rates of school failure, and escalating juvenile violence. Governor Pete Wilson has used his bully pulpit to increase public awareness of the problems resulting from fatherlessness. The first California Focus on Fathers' Summit was convened in 1995, and summits have been held each year since then.

Building on the state's early success in raising public awareness of the important role of fathers, California created the Partnership for Responsible Parenting (PRP) in 1996. PRP is a comprehensive \$54-million initiative that is administered by the state's department of social services. Designed to break the cycle of teen and unwed pregnancies and address the issues of statutory rape and absent fathers, it has four major components. Community challenge grants fund community-based organizations to operate programs aimed at decreasing teen pregnancy and fatherlessness. The California Mentor Initiative links responsible adults with at-risk youth to help these young people with life choices; Governor Wilson also mentors a young teenager. The Statutory Rape Vertical Prosecution Program discourages men from preying on young girls and encourages them to accept responsibility for their children. A statewide public awareness and action media campaign inspires Californians to become active participants in resolving these problems. Contact: Karen Strickland, Office of the Governor, 916/445-6131.

Colorado

Colorado's statewide fatherhood media campaign addresses the need for a comprehensive approach for disseminating information on the importance of father involvement to the healthy development of children. The initiative is a collaborative effort involving the Colorado Governor's Office; the Children's Hospital; the Colorado Child Support Enforcement Office; the Colorado Rockies, a Major League baseball team; US West; The Rocky Mountain News; and the local Fox broadcast affiliate. The primary objective of the multimedia campaign, "Be a Fan of Your Kid," is to promote fathers and father figures as role models for children. The campaign relies on the print media, television, and special events to communicate its message.

Public service announcements feature Colorado Rockies players and noncelebrity fathers speaking about the importance of father involvement. A phone number included in the public service announcements (PSAs) and other printed materials enables people to access information on father involvement and obtain referrals. PSAs also provide people with information on existing fatherhood programs and ways they can get involved in their communities. Governor Roy Romer is the primary spokesperson for the fatherhood.

The campaign, which kicked off on Father's Day, June 21, 1998, has reached all sixty-three Colorado counties. The cost is estimated to be \$100,000, though pro bono contributions from the various sponsors cover much of this cost. Contact: Jim Garcia, Office of the Governor, 303/866-2888.

Connecticut

The Connecticut Department of Social Services (DSS) was awarded a grant from the Office of Child Support Enforcement of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to demonstrate methods of conducting an outreach, education, and advocacy program for child support services through early care and education centers. One of the demonstration's objectives is to facilitate noncustodial parents' emotional and financial support of their children, if it is appropriate and healthy.

DSS entered into a contract with a nonprofit, community-based agency, the Connecticut Women's Education and Legal Fund (CWEALF), to work with three early care providers. The project incorporates strategies designed to overcome the fears and misconceptions of parents and early care providers regarding child support and the implications of being involved with DSS. Promotional materials, workshops, and information sessions enable the project to reach staff and parents.

Outreach to noncustodial fathers of children enrolled in Head Start is a special component of the project. By fall 1998, fathers at all three sites will attend parenting classes, work in the classroom, and receive the comprehensive services available to Head Start families. Education about child support and family responsibility has been woven into the program. The aim is to have fathers provide both emotional and financial support for their families.

An advisory committee has been established to assist DSS and CWEALF. In addition to the three early care providers, the committee includes representation from DSS' bureau of child support and child care team, the Governor's Collaboration for Young Children, INFOLINE, and parents. Federal funding is for fiscal 1997-98 and is renewable for two additional years. The federal grant has been matched with state funds and in-kind contributions. Contact: Tom Horan, Connecticut Department of Social Services, 860/424-5270.

Delaware

Recognizing that children of incarcerated fathers are at greater risk of developing education problems and becoming delinquent, the Delaware Department of Corrections (DOC), under the guidance of Governor Thomas R. Carper, has placed a high priority on the provision of parent education and support services to state prison inmates and individuals on probation. DOC offers prison inmates parenting classes that emphasize the unique parent-child issues of incarcerated fathers and group sessions that focus on the father's role in the family. In addition, to facilitate incarcerated fathers' return to their children and families, prerelease programming includes information on child developmental milestones and parenting techniques. Finally, probation officers routinely refer fathers under their supervision to parent education and support services in the community, using Delaware's Parent Education Partnership Inventory as a guide to available resources.

Three community-based nonprofit agencies funded by the Delaware Department of Services for Children, Youth, and Their Families (DSCYF) provide services to DOC inmates. DOC and DSCYF staff continue to explore next steps, which could include the development of a parent education curriculum or modules specifically tailored to meet the needs of inmate fathers, family focus training for DOC institutional and community-based services staff, a parent education and support program to assist inmates who are moving from an institution to the community, and an evaluation of different service delivery models. Contact: Lynne Howard, advisor on family issues, Office of the Governor, 302/577-3210.

Florida

The Florida Commission on Responsible Fatherhood (CORF) was established by the state legislature in 1996 to examine the fatherhood crisis in Florida and make recommendations on a coordinated, statewide effort to reduce the effects of this crisis on Florida's children. Specifically, the commission is responsible

for raising awareness of the problems created when a child grows up without a responsible father present, identifying obstacles that impede or prevent the involvement of responsible fathers in their children's lives, and identifying successful strategies to encourage responsible fatherhood.

In 1997 the commission heard expert testimony on topics such as custody proceedings and the effects of the presence of a responsible father on children's brain development. The commission also held public hearings in rural and urban areas across the state, adopted a vision statement, and developed a strategic plan to guide its work during the next twelve months and longer. CORF also made seven recommendations to the legislature in 1997, two of which were enacted into law. The codified recommendations address two barriers to responsible father involvement: primary residential parents' attempts to move away with the children over the objections of secondary residential parents and false allegations of child abuse and domestic violence.

Building on its successful First Annual Symposium on Responsible Fatherhood in 1997, the commission collaborated with the Florida Department of Juvenile Justice to convene the Second Annual Symposium on Responsible Fatherhood in Orlando in June 1998. The symposium featured presentations from nationally renowned experts on responsible fatherhood, showcased fatherhood programs from around the state, and provided technical assistance workshops for new and emerging programs. The symposium was attended by 500 people, more than double the number who attended the 1997 symposium.

In partnership with the Florida Department of Health, CORF awarded up to \$583,000 in grants in early 1998 to seventeen local initiatives promoting responsible fatherhood. CORF also is soliciting funds from public and private organizations to develop and expand responsible fatherhood initiatives in Florida. Contact: W. Byron "Buddy" Witmer, Florida Commission on Responsible Fatherhood, 850/488-4952.

Georgia

Almost 350,000 Georgia children live with their single mothers; 40 percent of these children have not seen their fathers during the past year. Recognizing the importance of fathers' involvement in their children's lives, the Georgia Department of Human Resources (DHR) launched an initiative to teach young men how to be more knowledgeable and responsible parents.

"Parent'Hood—It's a Man's Thing, Too" is a public awareness campaign that uses male volunteers to form child abuse prevention teams (captain teams). These men use educational materials developed by DHR to promote positive parenting and prevent child abuse in their communities.

"Parent'Hood" is sponsored by DHR's child protective services section. To date, the campaign has enlisted nearly 400 men to serve as spokespersons, mentors, and advocates of better parenting. It has received orders for its educational materials from nearly 300 community organizations and distributed nearly a quarter of a million items (e.g., fact sheets, brochures, videos, and T-shirts) promoting male involvement and child safety. The campaign theme has been promoted on bus cards in eight cities, through public service announcements in seventy-two movie theaters, and through numerous television, radio, and newspaper interviews. This ongoing initiative is federally funded. Contact: Renee Huie, Georgia Department of Human Resources, 404/656-4937 or rmh1@DHR.state.ga.us.

Hawaii

Hui Makuakane (Group of Fathers) is a parenting skills training initiative that works with fathers in families identified as at risk for child abuse and neglect. The participating fathers are in families being served by the Hana Like Home Visitor Program, a Healthy Start child abuse prevention program. Hui Makuakane aims to increase participating fathers' involvement with their children, promote the use of appropriate discipline techniques, and enhance fatherhood competence and satisfaction. Fathers are visited in their homes by a father involvement facilitator who offers information on child development and parenting and help on attaining their personal and family goals. Group activities and outings are conducted to encourage father-child-family interaction and enable fathers to meet for mutual support. The families served reside in specific census tracts on the island of Oahu; however, Native Hawaiian families

are accepted from other parts of the island. Eligible families must have at least one child from birth to age five.

The Hana Like Home Visitor Program is administered by Parents and Children Together (PACT), a private nonprofit, community-based organization, and is funded, in part, by the state department of health. The goals of Hana Like include preventing child abuse and neglect, strengthening the family's ability to solve problems and handle stress, and promoting optimal child development. Hui Makuakane is an enhancement to the Hana Like Home Visitor Program, providing specific support services to fathers. Hui Makuakane staff work with the Hana Like home visitors, who provide services primarily to the mothers, to coordinate services and promote family solidarity.

During the first year of the Hui Makuakane program, twenty-three dads and their fifty-nine children were served. PACT plans on serving thirty fathers during the second year. Contact: Sara Izen, program director, Parents and Children Together, 808/841-2245.

Idaho

The Idaho Department of Health and Welfare initiated the Parents as Partners program, a training curriculum for recently divorced fathers designed to facilitate their adjustment to, and preparation for, their new parenting role. The curriculum addresses the needs of both custodial and noncustodial divorced fathers, helping them develop positive and nurturing relationships with their children. It also targets young parents to impart parenting skills and other relevant information. The state is making the curriculum available for implementation by local community groups across the state. The initiative, still in the formative stage, is supported by \$3,000 in state funds. Contact: Anna Sever, Idaho Department of Health and Welfare, 208/334-5920.

Illinois

The Illinois Fatherhood Initiative (IFI) addresses responsible fathering by raising awareness of the important role fathers play in their children's lives. Its mission is "connecting children and fathers by promoting responsible fathering and helping equip men to become better fathers and father figures." The Illinois Fatherhood Initiative is a self-administered philanthropic organization, the first of its type in the nation. During the program's first three months, IFI hosted a community leader briefing attended by 120 community leaders, conducted a 1,000-person survey on perceptions of fatherhood, organized an essay contest that elicited more than 30,000 entries, trained twenty-four individuals as "father skills" trainers, and published 20,000 copies of children's essays on fatherhood.

On February 24, 1998, IFI conducted another community leader briefing on "Fathers, Families, and Building Communities" to report its accomplishments to the community, provide an overview of the national fatherhood landscape, and outline its plans for 1998.

To increase awareness and promote responsible fathering, IFI created the "1998 Faces of Fatherhood" calendar to raise funds for IFI and other community programs. A cover letter signed by Governor Jim Edgar and Chicago Mayor Richard M. Daley is distributed with each calendar to promote the calendar and the message of responsible fatherhood.

Several organizations have contributed both resources and talent to the conception and operation of IFI. In-kind and cash support totaled nearly \$500,000 in 1997. Contact: David Hirsch, Illinois Fatherhood Initiative, 312/648-3062.

Indiana

Indiana launched the Restoring Fatherhood Grant program to address the issue of fatherlessness, defined as the lack of a father's active involvement with his children, and its impact on children and families. In 1997 the state appropriated \$2.5 million and funded fifty-four programs across the state to help promote and restore fatherhood. These programs strive to increase fathers' involvement with their children, decrease out-of-wedlock pregnancies, improve fathers' access to services, improve parenting skills and coparenting relationships, raise the high school graduation rates of teen fathers, and increase paternity establishment and child support. The grants to community-based organizations, churches, schools, and

other entities range from \$10,000 to \$100,000. The grant program, administered by the Indiana Family and Social Services Administration, enables both the expansion of existing programs or the implementation of new fatherhood involvement strategies to increase fathers' emotional and financial involvement in their children's lives. Although the initiative targets all fathers and young males, the programs focus specifically on teen, incarcerated, divorced, and disengaged fathers. The state expects to serve 50,000 fathers and/or young males during the two-year funding cycle.

Funding for the initiative comes from savings Indiana realized as a result of the sharp reduction in its welfare caseload. Additional funding has been provided through the Indiana Family and Social Services Administration's family preservation grants and the Indiana Department of Health's teen pregnancy prevention grants. In October 1997, Governor Frank O'Bannon hosted the Governor's Conference on Fathers and Families, which equipped local programs with the tools they need to provide effective services to fathers and families. Emphasis was placed on teaching program directors and administrators how to measure and evaluate program effectiveness. The Governor also allocated an additional \$1 million to provide noncustodial parents who have children receiving public assistance with coparenting, parenting education, job-skills, and job-retention training. Contact: Tanasha Anders, Indiana Family and Social Services Administration, 317/233-4451.

Iowa

The Iowa Department of Human Services' Bureau of Collections has initiated a public awareness pilot project to promote responsible fatherhood. Called Dads Make a Difference, the pilot project will explore the merits of paternity-based education among Iowa teens. Its purposes are to give young people the opportunity to discuss the important role of fathers in their children's lives; the legal, financial, and emotional responsibilities of parenting; and the risks young people face in their path to adulthood. The Dads Make a Difference program was originally developed by the Minnesota Extension Service and the Minnesota Department of Human Services. The curriculum is designed to promote the importance of legal paternity. Four activity-based lessons are taught by high school-level teens to middle-school youth. High school-level teens and adult advisors must participate in a two-day intensive training session to be certified to present the program to middle-school youth. With the assistance of Iowa State University Extension, the bureau of collections anticipates working with Iowa high schools and community-based organizations to launch additional pilots in the coming year. Contact: Stevin Dahl, Bureau of Collections, Iowa Department of Human Services, 515/242-5505.

Louisiana

Noncustodial fathers are more likely to be involved in the lives of their children if they are contributing financially to their children's well-being. Louisiana's recently approved federal Welfare-to-Work (WtW) Grant program plan outlines a state initiative targeting noncustodial parents of children supported by Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) who cannot provide adequate financial support to their children because of a lack of job skills or job-seeking abilities. The initiative not only is designed to increase child support collections, but also to foster greater contact between noncustodial parents and their children.

Through this initiative, noncustodial parents will have access to all the training, job search, and support service assistance that is afforded to TANF recipients. Parenting skills training will also be made available to help noncustodial parents become more involved with their children and better parents. However, the scale and scope of the program will depend on the support of the local judicial system. The judge presiding over the child support order must include participation in WtW activities as part of the court order for this initiative to be most effective.

The initiative will be administered jointly by local Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) and TANF agency staff. Although the Welfare-to-Work funds are technically controlled by the local JTPA governance entity, the state's planning guidelines strongly encourage the local administrative entities to set aside a portion of their WtW allocations to fund this initiative. In their preliminary plans submitted to the state, all of the local JTPA entities committed to earmarking a portion of their WtW funds to serve this population. If the local pilots are successful, the state may seek state appropriations to continue these

efforts after the expiration of the federal WtW grant funds in two years. Contact: Laura Pease, Family Independence Work Program, Louisiana Department of Social Services, 504/342-2511.

Maine

The Maine Department of Human Services has established a regional system of job fairs to help unemployed, noncustodial parents and TANF recipients identify employment opportunities in their area. Noncustodial parents who have not paid child support in the last sixty days are invited to attend one of the regional job fairs scheduled across the state. The department's division of support enforcement and recovery, which administers the notification process, identifies all noncustodial parents who have not paid child support in the last sixty days within the region where the fair is being held and invites them to the fair. The department's bureau of family independence coordinates and funds the job fairs, which were initially established for TANF recipients. At each job fair, area employers are assigned booths to distribute employment applications and, on occasion, conduct interviews. To date, 8,000 noncustodial parents have been invited to seven job fairs. Turnout has been exceptional, and the job fairs will continue to be held periodically in each area of the state. Contact: Stephen Hussey, director, Child Support Program, Division of Support Enforcement and Recovery, Maine Department of Human Services, 207/287-2844 or stephen.l.hussey@state.me.us.

Maryland

To assist young men who are unable to fulfill their financial, moral, and social responsibilities to their children, Maryland established the Young Fathers/Responsible Fathers Program within the department of human resources. This program provides educational and employment opportunities as well as emotional support to enable fathers to play a productive role in their children's lives. It targets unwed and expectant fathers who are at risk of forsaking their parental responsibilities. The program has served more than 350 young men annually through outreach, case management, and after-care services referrals. Participants have become actively involved in child rearing, become employed, paid child support on a regular basis, completed their high school equivalency certificate, enrolled in higher education programs, and become mentors to younger men.

In partnership with the Maryland Child Support Enforcement Administration, the Young Fathers/Responsible Fathers Program also is working to support noncustodial parents. The two entities work very closely to enhance services by helping existing fatherhood programs secure funding from the federal government and other sources. In a six-month period, this partnership increased funding in the state for fatherhood programming by nearly 100 percent. In addition, these two entities are working together to educate Marylanders on current fatherhood initiatives and the importance of including both parents in programs for children and families.

The Young Fathers/Responsible Fathers Program is being implemented in eight of the state's twenty-four jurisdictions, but its expansion to other areas is planned. Its success is the result of Governor Parris N. Glendening's commitment to reform welfare and use new child support enforcement strategies. The program is jointly funded by the state and the federal government. Contact: Lynn Mitchell, Governor's Washington, D.C. Office, 202/624-1430 or lmitchell@gov.state.md.us.

Massachusetts

Building on the successful Fathers and Our Future Summit held in June 1997, then Governor William F. Weld and then Lieutenant Governor Argeo Paul Cellucci created the Governor's Commission on Father Absence and Family Support to respond to the crisis of absent fathers and the need for greater government and community coordination in support of Massachusetts families.

Established by executive order, the commission operates under the premises that all parents should take responsibility for their children and that fathers are critical partners in increasing children's health and well-being. Governor Cellucci takes a hands-on leadership approach with respect to the commission, serving as its chair, appointing its members, reviewing its recommendations, and leading its meetings. The commission's work is coordinated by the Governor; his staff; and the department of revenue's child support division, which is the commission's sponsoring agency. The twenty-two members of the

commission include community, government, faith, and academic leaders who work on four task forces that focus on family relationships, community resources, prevention, and mentoring.

The Governor's Commission on Father Absence and Family Support provides statewide leadership on the problems that arise when fathers are absent from their children's lives. These issues include paternity establishment, out-of-wedlock births, juvenile crime, employment, child support enforcement, and teen pregnancy. The commission also is focusing on the issues of marriage and divorce, adoption and foster care, visitation, and the impact of domestic violence on children. Through its four task forces, the commission conducts critical research in their respective areas and provides a forum for community, faith, and legal organizations to offer their views and share their concerns. The commission is interested in developing strategies to better coordinate the policies and programs of government, community, and faith-based organizations. Contact: William Smith, Office of the Governor, 617/727-3600.

Michigan

Michigan's Fatherhood Campaign, launched by Governor John Engler in 1995, is the result of an innovative partnership between the Detroit Lions of the National Football League (NFL) and Michigan's Family Independence Agency (FIA). The campaign is an outgrowth of a hospital paternity program's public information efforts and is designed to increase fathers' awareness of their roles and responsibilities in child rearing.

The campaign's goal is to convey to young people the importance of family life and encourage fathers—married, divorced, or single fathers—to become involved in their children's lives. The campaign seeks to increase awareness of fatherhood and paternity issues by using professional sports figures as role models. It includes television and radio public service announcements, billboards, newspaper advertisements, and calendars. In addition to the media campaign, in 1996 and 1997, the Detroit Lions honored and recognized the Fatherhood Campaign at a NFL game. The team printed a full-page article on the campaign in the game program, posted billboard photos, and aired the television public service announcements during the third quarter of the game. In addition, during the game, the office of child support made award presentations to the players involved in the campaign. Articles and pictures depicting the event have been published in the Lions Roar and the Lions Report magazines.

The office of child support in FIA spends approximately \$200,000 annually for the Fatherhood Campaign. The fiscal 1997 campaign was funded with state and federal funds; the Detroit Lions provided in-kind supports. Contact: Eileen Schrauben, Office of Child Support, Michigan Family Independence Agency, 517/335-3921.

Missouri

Most fathers want to contribute to the upbringing of their children, but some are unable to do so because of a lack of education, job skills, or employment opportunities. Missouri's Partners for Children is a parent-driven program to help low-income, noncustodial fathers become self-sufficient, pay their child support, and assume a more active, positive role in their children's lives.

The Partners for Children program recognizes that fragile families need help and support in learning parenting skills and breaking past behavior cycles. Participating fathers gain valuable skills not only to meet their financial responsibilities, but also to meet their children's emotional needs. The program teaches fathers the importance of being a positive role model and becoming involved in their children's development and education. The program also uses the existing network of community-based services by making necessary referrals to family, education, employment, substance abuse, and other support services. Fathers also receive mediation services to help them resolve visitation issues.

Partners for Children requires participating fathers to contribute at least \$50 in child support payments within one month of entering the program, or \$20 if they have no income. Fathers are given goals to reach; if they actively cooperate in the program, a portion of their child support debt may be forgiven. Partners for Children began in Kansas City under the guidance of the Missouri Department of Social Services and a community collaborative in Kansas City called the Local Investment Commission.

Governor Mel Carnahan is expanding Partners for Children statewide. Contact: Dave Damico, Division of Child Support Enforcement, Missouri Department of Social Services, 816/889-5183.

Montana

Montana Governor Marc Racicot has set a standard for the state's human service agencies to ensure that strategies targeting families provide for the full participation of fathers. In response to this charge, the Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services has modified or developed programs to more fully involve fathers.

The Families Achieving Independence (FAIM) program, Montana's welfare reform initiative, now views fathers as valued team and family members. Policies that penalized marriage and discouraged paternal child rearing have been eliminated. FAIM also stresses the importance of two-parent families and provides support to families, including child care assistance and parenting skills training. The role of the father as a family partner has been enhanced through these policies.

The Montana Partnership Project, which provides services to families in fourteen areas of the state to ensure that children remain safely with their parents, now provides fathers with the opportunity to learn nurturing and communication skills. As a result of the enhanced bonding among family members, fathers feel more committed to the long-term support of their children.

Family preservation conferencing involves parents and extended family members in developing strategies to ensure that children have a safe and permanent home. The initiative is operating in two Montana cities and will soon be expanded statewide. This family-centered approach to child safety and family preservation enhances the father's role by ensuring a place at the table for him and his support group. In some cases where fathers had begun to lose contact with their children, this project has clarified the important role they must play in the continued development of their children. Contact: Hank Hudson, administrator, Child and Family Services Division, Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services, 406/444-5002 or hhudson@mt.gov.

Nebraska

All of the birthing hospitals in Nebraska are participating in the state's Hospital Paternity Acknowledgement Program. The program encourages unmarried fathers to acknowledge paternity of their child at the time of birth. It was launched in recognition of the fact that early acknowledgment of paternity fosters the involvement of both parents early in the child's life. The earlier paternity is established, the sooner the child will develop a relationship with the father and gain access to the father's medical benefits, medical history information, financial support, and other benefits. Early paternity establishment also reduces the difficulty of locating unmarried fathers, which often occurs when paternity establishment is delayed.

The program is administered by the participating hospitals and the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services, Child Support Enforcement Unit and Vital Statistics Office. Soon after each birth to an unmarried couple, hospital staff meet with the father to talk about fatherhood and the father's responsibility. They encourage the father to sign a paternity acknowledgment form and provide both parents with informational brochures and the opportunity to view a videotape about paternity establishment. The staff also ensure that the acknowledgment form is completed correctly and has notarized signatures and that birth certificate documents are completed so that the name of the father can be placed on the birth certificate. Then staff of the department of health and human services' child support enforcement unit and vital statistics office as well as county-authorized attorneys complete the necessary legal procedures to establish paternity.

The program accounts for more than 3,000 paternity acknowledgments per year. In 1995, the first year of implementation, 53 percent of all nonmarried births were accompanied by a signed paternity acknowledgment form. In 1996, 54.4 percent of out-of-wedlock births were accompanied by a signed paternity acknowledgment form. Contact: Barb Wilson, Child Support Enforcement Unit, Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services, 402/479-5503.

New Hampshire

Project Phoenix is a demonstration project that provides education, job training, and other support services to noncustodial parents who have limited education, have poor work histories, and are having difficulty meeting their child support obligations. It is administered by the division of child support services of the New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS). The support services include activities to enhance the involvement and parenting skills of noncustodial parents.

Project Phoenix serves approximately 10 percent of the 3,000 child support enforcement cases in Merrimack County, the largest of New Hampshire's ten counties. Initially, the project was a collaborative effort involving two agencies of DHHS, supported with Job Opportunities and Basic Skills (JOBS) Training program funds and by Project Second Start, a well-established private nonprofit organization serving custodial and noncustodial parents. Project Phoenix's annual budget of \$25,000 is supported entirely through a U.S. Department of Health and Human Services demonstration grant. Contact: Jean Marston, Division of Child Support Services, New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services, 603/271-4436 or jmarston@dhhs.state.nh.us.

New Jersey

One of the ways New Jersey is promoting responsible fatherhood is through its Minority Male Community Challenge Grant Initiative. Grants are awarded to community-based organizations to provide services for high-risk minority male populations. The initiative's goals are to support the family unit; prevent or remedy health conditions in minority males; encourage young men to stay in school and reach their full potential; impart to young men the technical skills needed in the future; and reduce the likelihood that young men will become involved in the criminal justice system. It also is hoped that the young men served through the initiative will postpone becoming parents until they are emotionally and financially prepared to be responsible fathers. Although the initiative targets minority males of all ages, the majority of programs serve school-age (i.e., elementary-level through college-level) individuals.

In 1997 nineteen programs were funded across the state at a cost of \$185,842. The nineteen programs served 1,666 minority males with an array of services, including computer training, mentoring, job-skill and job-readiness training, violent crime prevention activities, tutoring and academic enrichment opportunities, literacy services, English-as-a-Second-Language classes, social and recreational programs, career training, counseling, and health education.

Administered by the division of family development within the New Jersey Department of Human Services, this initiative is outcome-oriented. Since its inception in 1992, the programs funded under the initiative have shown a high rate of program completion and attainment of program goals, such as learning new skills, entering college, or securing employment. The state legislature appropriated \$160,000 for this program in 1998; this amount is being supplemented with \$40,000 from the state's welfare reform initiative, Work First New Jersey. Contact: Robert Hodes, Grants Unit, Division of Family Development, New Jersey Department of Human Services, 609/584-4040.

New York

The New York State Office of Children and Family Services administers grants to twenty-eight Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention and Services (APPS) programs located in high-need communities of the state. Although young men have not been completely excluded from these programs—26 percent of the youth served by APPS are males—most programs were designed to serve young women and components for young men were added on to some programs. At the same time, there has been a growing recognition that young men, particularly young fathers, require special attention because of their role in teen pregnancy and as fathers. To address this need, New York began the Parental Responsibility Program as part of APPS in 1995 through which four demonstration projects were funded to focus exclusively on young fathers. The projects sought to increase the level of responsibility young fathers have for their children.

The four demonstration projects provided case management services; information and support concerning paternity, child support, and custody; parenting skills classes; support groups; and life-skills training. In addition, they provided job-readiness training and employment and training referrals to address the entry-level and long-term employment needs of young fathers. About half of the young men served by the projects were between the ages of nineteen and twenty-one, and the other half were below age eighteen. Three fourths of the youth were young fathers, and one quarter had a partner who was expecting a child.

The four-year pilot ended earlier this year. However, three of the four demonstration sites are continuing the young father's program using their other APPS funds. Contact: James P. Ryan, director, Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention and Services Unit, New York State Office of Children and Families, 518/473-7950. North Carolina

The Brunswick Learning Center, an alternative school in North Carolina serving teen mothers, was in its third year of operation when the center staff realized that while they were helping mothers, they were not reaching out to fathers. The center's teen family development coordinator, Linda Shaddix asserts, "It is easy to forget about teen fathers, because the mothers are the ones having the babies. But, a lot of teen dads want to be good fathers, and we want to help them do that."

The Brunswick Teen Fatherhood Project, a part of the Brunswick County School System, helps teen dads become better fathers by helping them understand their role as fathers and develop parenting skills. The classes help the young men think about what kind of father they want to be and how their behavior advances or hinders their achievement of that objective. Although the program currently is confined to the alternative school, it will soon also provide outreach classes and classes on healthy family relationships at Brunswick County's three high schools. The classes will help the young men examine and define their relationships with their child and their child's mother. Since the program is relatively new, only a few teen fathers are enrolled. However, in a county with such a high rate of teen pregnancy, the number of fathers involved in the project is expected to increase.

The Brunswick Teen Fatherhood Project is funded by a \$30,000 grant from the Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation. The Brunswick Learning Center is partially financed by the local Partnership for Children, which is a part of the Governor's Smart Start initiative. Contact: Linda Shaddix, teen family coordinator, Brunswick Learning Center, 910/457-0777.

Ohio

The Institute for Responsible Fatherhood and Family Revitalization helps young fathers in Cleveland, Ohio, become responsible citizens and involved, caring parents. The goal of the nonprofit institute is to turn the hearts of fathers to their children and to turn the hearts of children to their fathers. Fathers receive intense, nontraditional one-on-one support, group support, family outreach, father skills training, health and nutrition information, medical and housing referrals, and education and career guidance. Many of the fathers served by the institute did not have involved fathers during their childhoods to model responsible fatherhood. The institute's staff, which serves between 100 and 150 families per year, interacts with young fathers in their homes with the hope that these services will enable family problems to be managed at the core.

The program also provides outreach services to incarcerated fathers as well as support sessions involving mothers and fathers to address issues specific to female-headed households, such as noncustodial fathering, communication skills, developmentally appropriate activities for children, and child discipline. After the fathers are enrolled and assessed, they are assigned to an outreach specialist who is committed to modeling a risk-free lifestyle and is trained in the art of listening to facilitate communication with the fathers. The project has been supported by the Ohio Department of Human Services and the Ohio Department of Alcohol and Drug Addiction Services, which provided a \$123,000 grant in 1991 and a \$10,000 grant in 1994, but now it is funded primarily by grants from various foundations.

First implemented in Cleveland, the program is now being replicated in Washington D.C.; Nashville, Tennessee; Milwaukee, Wisconsin; Yonkers, New York; and San Diego, California, under the aegis of

the National Institute for Responsible Fatherhood and Family Development. Contact: Joanne Palmer, Institute for Responsible Fatherhood and Family Revitalization, 216/791-1468.

Oklahoma

The majority of youth in Oklahoma's juvenile justice system have critical issues related to fatherhood feeling anger toward their dad for not being there, experiencing abuse from their father if he was there, and feeling inadequate to be a father themselves because of a lack of role models in their community. The Oklahoma Office of Juvenile Affairs has revamped its entire treatment approach for juvenile offenders to address the root causes of their anger and begin to heal their relationships with their fathers. The model the state is using is the Bethesda Treatment Model, which requires recognition and accountability for offenses and then brings young offenders beyond management of their anger to resolution of their anger. The primary tool to achieve this healing is forgiveness of their fathers. Oklahoma is experiencing powerful results as these young offenders are released from their emotional cage and set free to be productive men and responsible fathers. A preliminary study of the original Bethesda Treatment Model showed recidivism rates of only 5 percent, far lower than state and national norms.

The Oklahoma Office of Juvenile Affairs also has launched a Parent Guardian Support Network to support parents of troubled youth and increase the involvement of the fathers in these young people's lives. The state will convene a Fatherhood Summit in spring 1999. Contact: Jerry Regier, Cabinet Secretary for Health and Human Services, 405/ 530-2800.

Pennsylvania

Pennsylvania's Education Mentoring Program seeks to address the problems arising from the large number of young people who have been raised without positive, adult role models in their lives and who, as a result, are at greater risk of dropping out of school, becoming involved with drugs, or committing acts of violence. Administered by the Pennsylvania Department of Education, the statewide pilot program provides small grants to nonprofit, community-based organizations to work collaboratively with local public schools to develop or expand education mentoring programs that link responsible, caring adults with at-risk children and youth. The goal of these partnerships is to raise students' academic achievement and thus reduce their risk of dropping out of school. In October 1997, the department of education made the first awards to sixteen community-based organizations to establish mentoring programs.

One of the projects supported by the Education Mentoring Program is a Father to Father mentoring program established by Family Services of Northwestern Pennsylvania. Located in Erie, Pennsylvania, the program links teenage fathers with responsible adult men who are themselves fathers. Through a collaboration involving Family Services, the Fathers Workshop, the Erie School District, and Leadership Erie, the Father to Father program will work with these young fathers on completing school, establishing career goals, using holistic parenting, and being responsible fathers.

The Education Mentoring Program is a part of Governor Tom Ridge's Project for Community Building. This project provides resources and support for community-based, community-driven strategies in distressed communities to address the challenges of economic distress, school failure, youth violence, and teenage pregnancy. Community Building includes support for community development banks, family savings accounts, charter schools, and abstinence-based education programs. The Education Mentoring Program was funded at \$250,000 in the Governor's fiscal 1997-98 budget; funding will increase to \$500,000 in fiscal 1998-99. Contact: Jim Buckheit, Pennsylvania Department of Education, 717/783-3755.

Puerto Rico

In Puerto Rico, the department of education, the child support enforcement administration of the department of the family, the office on youth affairs, the department of justice, and the Volunteers Corps of Puerto Rico—all part of the Governor's Our Children First Congress—have joined together to promote the concept of responsible paternity among school-age children. The goals of the initiative are to reduce out-of-wedlock births and teach responsible parenting.

To launch the initiative, eleven regional conferences will be held in fall 1998 to train approximately 650 teaching professionals on responsible paternity. The trainers will include personnel from the department of education as well as professionals from the clinical, social, neurological, and mental health fields. The teachers will learn how to successfully incorporate responsible paternity into Puerto Rico's existing health education curriculum.

Although the responsible paternity program will serve both girls and boys in kindergarten through grade twelve, its emphasis is on educating male students, who traditionally have been reluctant to accept parenting responsibilities. The initiative will also address parenting skills, specifically for young fathers (e.g., responsible child rearing and its effect on early brain development) and awareness of child support laws. The program will be implemented during the 1998-99 school year. Federal Title IV-D funds will support the initiative. Contact: Jennifer L. Garity, advisor to the Governor on social welfare, 787/725-4449 or jpgarity@fortaleza.prstar.net

Rhode Island

The Male Responsibility Project was developed as a component of the Rhode Island Department of Human Services' Adolescent Self-Sufficiency Collaborative to prevent boys from becoming fathers too early. Five community-based organizations already under contract to the department to serve pregnant and parenting adolescent girls operate the project in ten cities and towns. The sites include the five cities with the state's highest rates of teen pregnancies.

Each of the five projects has its own unique approach to the development of male responsibility. However, each project is required to operate after school, during evenings and weekends, and over vacation periods, as well as include community service, substance abuse education, violence prevention, problemsolving and decisionmaking skills development, male responsibility and sexuality education, and recreational activities. The direct services are provided by male counselors. The project serves thirteen- to eighteen-year-old boys, some of whom may already be fathers. The participating boys are attending one of the targeted high schools and middle schools around the state or attending local community centers. Most of the participants are attending school and are from low-income families or families receiving public assistance, though participation can also extend to out-of-school and employed boys. This and all other department pregnancy prevention initiatives exemplify the belief that "a collaborative youth/family/school/community effort, which focuses on young peoples' strengths and helps them develop their assets and resiliency, holds the most promise for successfully impacting teen pregnancy, violence, and tobacco, drug, and alcohol use."

The Adolescent Self-Sufficiency Collaborative received an additional \$175,000 funding for the Male Responsibility Project in fiscal 1997. Recognizing the importance of preventing out-of-wedlock births, especially to adolescents, Governor Lincoln Almond and the Rhode Island General Assembly appropriated \$250,000 for fiscal 1998 to fund initiatives for these purposes. Local projects began April 1, 1998, and will continue until at least June 30, 2001, depending on available funds. The five projects will be evaluated on their ability to decrease negative risk-taking behaviors, such as criminal activity and violence, gang membership, and use of illegal substances. They will also be evaluated on their ability to encourage participants to remain abstinent, or to use condoms if sexually active, and to improve participants' school attendance and grades; access to medical care; decisionmaking skills; conflict resolution skills; and knowledge of reproductive health issues. Contact: Pamela Goodwin, Rhode Island Department of Human Services, 401/464-2422 or pgoodwin@gw.dhs.state.ri.us.

South Carolina

South Carolina has used several strategies to increase public awareness of the importance of positive father involvement. Public service announcements featuring Governor David M. Beasley and his family have aired on television and radio stations across the state. At media events organized on Fathers' Day, the Governor spoke about the importance of fatherhood and the negative impacts of father absence on children and on society.

In summer 1997, the Governor convened the Governor's Summit on Fatherhood in collaboration with the National Fatherhood Initiative. This summit sought to forge a consensus among community leaders and social service providers regarding the importance of fatherhood. It also was designed to share best practices from across the nation that encourage responsible fatherhood. Nationally known leaders in this area, including Charles Ballard and many others, presented their models to the conferees. More than 150 leaders attended the conference and responded to the call for leadership with great enthusiasm.

In addition to these initiatives, South Carolina continues to look for ways to promote responsible fatherhood through state policies. The state is taking positive steps to reduce out-of-wedlock births, promote marriage (e.g., through counseling), and increase child support collections (e.g., through more punitive measures). The Governor continues to use his bully pulpit to foster a cultural consensus that fathers make a unique and irreplaceable difference in the lives of their children and families. The state also believes the private sector can do a great deal that government cannot do by supporting programs like those featured at the Governor's Summit on Fatherhood. Contact: Larry Huff, director of family policy, 803/734-9861.

Tennessee

Tennessee's Institute for Responsible Fatherhood and Family Revitalization works with low-income, noncustodial fathers residing in Nashville who have become disconnected from their children both financially and emotionally. The goal is for fathers to become more involved in their children's lives by establishing paternity, enabling them to pay child support, and encouraging them to spend more time with their children. The institute's emphasis is on helping fathers gain employment so they can better support their children financially.

The initiative provides job training, education, employment assistance, and counseling to the father. The counseling addresses the father's relationships with both his children and the mother of his children to build a stronger foundation for job-related efforts.

The project serves primarily noncustodial fathers. However, their children and the children's mothers also are invited to take advantage of the institute's services. Since the three-year pilot began in September 1996, 185 people have been served; as of January 1998 ninety-three of them were still participating in the program.

Governor Don Sundquist supported and signed the legislation for this pilot project, which was moving through the legislature simultaneously with his Families First welfare reform legislation. The project's annual budget for three years is \$140,000. The Institute for Responsible Fatherhood and Family Revitalization operates the project with funding from the Tennessee Department of Human Services, using state Families First funds and federal child support funds. In addition, the local institute and the National Institute for Responsible Fatherhood and Family Development, with which it is affiliated, raise funds from other sources, such as the Ford Foundation.

In addition, Tennessee's Welfare-to-Work formula grant plan calls for expanding services to noncustodial parents in one or two counties in every Job Training Partnership Act service delivery area in the state. The new programs will use the curriculum developed by the Nashville project. Contact: Wanda Moore, director, Families First and Food Stamps, Tennessee Department of Human Resources, 615/313-5652.

Texas

On October 8, 1998, Texas will convene the first-ever "Texas Fatherhood Forum: A Statewide Call to Action" in Houston. The forum, which will be held annually in the future, aims to promote responsible fatherhood by highlighting the indispensable role of fathers and the critical responsibilities they have in raising their children. It will emphasize the importance of responsibly engaged fathers as the key to maintaining children's healthy development and combating the societal damage caused and exacerbated by father absence. This collaborative effort is cosponsored by the Texas Education Agency, the Center for Successful Fathering, and the Texas Attorney General's Office. Governor George W. Bush, an early

member of the Governor's Task Force on Fatherhood Promotion, consistently and visibly uses his office to spotlight the integral role of parents in children's lives, and he is supporting the upcoming forum.

The Texas Fatherhood Forum will include concurrent sessions on various fatherhood-related topics; feature nationally recognized fatherhood and family experts, such as Wade Horn of the National Fatherhood Initiative; and showcase successful Texas fatherhood programs. It will also be a gathering place for representatives of different fatherhood programs from around the state to network and share information related to fathers, fatherhood, and fathering. Forum participants will include hundreds of parents, educators, community and business leaders, leaders of faith-based groups, public officials, program administrators, and fatherhood program organizers interested in mobilizing communities to launch initiatives that support active fathers, reconnect men with their children, and sustain the traditions of responsible fatherhood.

During the forum, the Center for Successful Fathering will debut the Texas Fatherhood Initiative, an ambitious two-part campaign to increase public awareness and action and offer training and resources to organizations throughout the state via the new Texas Fatherhood Practitioners' Network. The center also will present its first Texas Status Report on Fathering, and it is sponsoring a Texas Father of the Year essay, photo, and drawing contest. Contact: Albert Black, Texas Education Agency, 512/475-3488 or ablack@tmail.tea.state.tx.us; or Ron Klinger, Center for Successful Fathering, 512/258-1259, 800/537-0853, or rklinger@flash.net.

Utah

The Governor's Initiative on Families Today (G.I.F.T) was launched with a grant from Utah's legislature in 1994 to foster a climate that nurtures and enhances healthy, positive, caring family interaction. The initiative seeks to provide as many Utah parents as possible with the parenting and communication skills they need to deal with the difficult challenges facing families today. The initiative is cochaired by Governor Michael O. Leavitt and First Lady Jacalyn Leavitt. The fifty-member advisory committee is composed of representatives of organizations, agencies, and businesses that serve families and children.

G.I.F.T uses a variety of approaches to help strengthen Utah families. Family conferences and marriage enrichment seminars are held in various locations across the state, including specific workshops for fathers that address fatherhood issues. G.I.F.T collaborates with Utah State University Extension Services, the Governor's Commission for Women and Families, the Utah Department of Human Services' division of child and family services, local PTAs, and the Utah Center for Families in Education to arrange these conferences and seminars.

Family conferences also are held under the direction of the office of ethnic affairs of the Utah Department of Community and Economic Development. The directors of Asian Affairs, Black Affairs, Hispanic Affairs, Indian Affairs, and Polynesian Affairs have been instrumental in arranging conferences for their respective constituencies. G.I.F.T also is a collaborating partner with a local television and radio station (KSL) on the "Family Now" program. "Family Now" offers special programs and public service announcements on television and radio to inform Utah families of events, available resources, and tips on parenting and family relationships. The state provides approximately \$10,000 per year to support G.I.F.T. Contact: Carol Bench, director of the Governor's Initiative on Families Today, 801/538-1533.

Virginia

The Virginia Fatherhood Campaign, launched in 1996, is the cornerstone of Virginia's effort to promote responsible fatherhood. The program encourages all men to commit to being good fathers, spend time with their children, and become more responsible for the health and welfare of their children. The campaign attempts to improve family health, well-being, and stability as a basis for building stronger communities throughout the commonwealth.

The first part of this initiative is a mass media campaign consisting of television and radio public service announcements and newsprint and outdoor advertisements. By February 1998, more than 100 television spots and interviews on the Virginia Fatherhood Campaign had been aired, and more than 50,000

brochures promoting responsible fatherhood had been distributed. In response, more than 100,000 citizens have called the campaign resource center for information at 1-800-790-DADS. Officials from twenty-four other states also have called to request information. As determined by an independent survey, 39 percent of Virginia's 7 million residents have been reached by the campaign.

The second part of this initiative involves regional fatherhood forums. Eight forums have been held to empower communities with information and support needed to implement fatherhood programs and projects. Moreover, the forums enlist community leaders from every sector of society—business, civic, religious, and political—to make a commitment to improve family life in their local areas by addressing the absent father problem.

The third aspect of the Virginia Fatherhood Campaign involves seed grants. A total of \$150,000 in grants ranging from \$2,500 to \$7,500 were distributed in 1996–97 to local community programs. Applicants included private, public, and religious groups. For example, a seed grant was given to a fatherhood mentorship program in Portsmouth that pairs responsible young fathers with young fathers who have little or no involvement with their children. Contact: Ron J. Clark, Virginia Department of Health, 804/786-7367.

Washington

The Devoted Dads project, which will be launched in August 1998 in Tacoma, Washington, is designed to increase public awareness of the important role that fathers play in their children's lives and the need for responsible fatherhood. The project also aims to enhance the ability of young, low-income fathers to participate responsibly in the emotional, social, and financial lives of their children. The program includes the following components:

public information campaigns to foster a change in the way fatherhood is viewed in neighborhoods;
self-help centers to assist noncustodial parents resolve issues related to child support obligations and visitation;

comprehensive life-skills education to provide young, low-income fathers with fatherhood/parenting development education, one-to-one personal counseling, family assistance, and other related activities;
career development counseling to enable young low-income fathers to meet their financial obligations as parents; and

peer education sessions in which teams of young fathers present information on paternity, child support, teen parenting, and pregnancy prevention to youth in local high schools, community centers, and other areas where young persons congregate.

Devoted Dads is a community partnership developed by the division of child support of the Washington Department of Social and Health Services; the Tacoma Enterprise Community; the Metropolitan Development Council, a local community action agency; and the Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department. The total program budget is approximately \$1.4 million for four years. The Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department, under a federal waiver request supported by Governor Gary Locke and approved by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, is providing the state's share of the funding for the project. Contact: Karen Wheeler, Washington Department of Social and Health Services, 253/627-1545, ext. 2628, or kwheeler@dshs.wa.gov.

Wisconsin

Governor Tommy G. Thompson has sought to strengthen fragile families by providing tools to both mothers and fathers of Wisconsin children. He has been intimately involved in shaping Wisconsin's pioneering efforts to serve noncustodial parents through welfare reform. Under the state's welfare replacement program, Wisconsin Works (W-2), all noncustodial parents with W-2 eligible children are offered case management services, life-skills training, and work-skills training. In addition to Wisconsin Works, the state is conducting a pilot program, Team Parenting, to increase both parents' emotional and financial support of their children. Team Parenting seeks to address low rates of paternity establishment, too few child support payers, and inadequate noncustodial parent work skills and employment.

Goodwill Industries of Southeastern Wisconsin is administering the pilot as a part of the Ford Foundation's Partners for Fragile Families Initiative. Goodwill is collaborating with the Wisconsin

Department of Workforce Development, Racine County welfare and child support agencies, the National Center for Strategic Nonprofit Planning and Leadership Development, and the Hudson Institute.

Team Parenting will serve noncustodial parents who have established paternity as well as those who have not established paternity, including expectant fathers. It is expected that young, low-income, minority males who have had some involvement with the criminal justice system will be typical participants. The project will foster more responsible parenting through innovative recruitment strategies, multilevel case management, peer counseling, parenting workshops, connections to child support enforcement, and job-skills training and work placements.

Project planning is in the final stages, and implementation of the full-scale demonstration will begin in fall 1998. Funding for the three-year demonstration is being provided by the federal Office of Child Support Enforcement (\$237,500 per year); the Ford Foundation (\$200,000 per year); the Coalition of Community Foundations (\$20,000 for three years); and other local funding sources (\$12,500 per year). Contact: J. Jean Rogers, administrator, Division of Economic Support, Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development, 608/266-3035 or rogerje@mail.state.wi.us.

Wyoming

Wyoming is promoting responsible fatherhood by attempting to increase the likelihood that each man who fathers a child is prepared to become a father. In many cases, males are not involved in making contraceptive choices, which often leads to unintended pregnancies. By involving more males in family planning, unintended pregnancies will be reduced. The Wyoming Reproductive Health Council is conducting research to identify the barriers to male involvement in family planning. The project is conducting focus groups with males, especially male adolescents; clinic staff; and females to determine the factors that might encourage more male participation in family planning programs. Once data are gathered, interventions will be initiated to address the issues raised in the focus groups.

Initially, the program is focusing on adolescent males but will be expanded to include all males in the state. The initial research phase of the project will likely be completed in fall 1998 with the assistance of the University of Wyoming Department of Social Work. Once the research and analysis phases are completed, sites will be chosen for pilot projects. Funding for the project is being provided by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services under its Title X Family Planning Program special initiative. The initiative also involves the Wyoming Department of Health's Maternal and Child Health Unit and Sexually Transmitted Diseases Unit, the regional infertility project of the Wyoming Department of Disease Prevention, the Committee on Minority Health, the Wyoming Department of Family Services, the Cheyenne City/County Health Department, the Unintended Pregnancy Task Force, and the University of Wyoming Graduate School of Social Work. Contact: Dan Christopoulos, program development director, Wyoming Reproductive Health Council, 307/742-7700.

*The National Governors' Association (NGA) Committee on Human Resources and the NGA Center for Best Practices thank Wade Horn, executive director of the National Fatherhood Initiative (NFI), for his help in compiling the information presented in this StateLine. For more information on promoting responsible fatherhood, contact NFI at 301/948-5999 or <<http://www.fatherhood.org>>.

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